

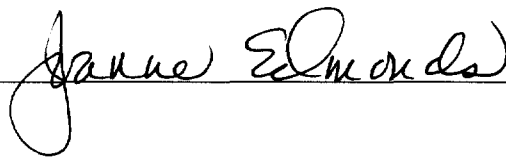
Evelyn Waugh: An Oxonian Life Parallels *Brideshead Revisited*

An Honors Thesis

by

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Joanne Edmonds", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

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Abstract

English writer Evelyn Waugh has been known for using characters from his life in many of his literary works, including his novel *Brideshead Revisited*. Through analyzing my study abroad trip to Harris Manchester College in Oxford, England, the novel itself, and Evelyn Waugh's life, I discuss the comparisons that can be drawn and conclude with why I think many of the similarities cannot be avoided.

Acknowledgements

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All my love (til Monday),

Krista M. Pomeroy

Evelyn Waugh: An Oxonian Life Parallels *Brideshead Revisited*

On Saturday, July 24, 1999, I, along with ten other Ball State University Honors College students, stepped into a world of beauty and tradition. Oxford University is famous for its medieval buildings with their reaching spires and for its aspiring academics. We were in Oxford to study abroad at Harris Manchester College and to experience the culture that has inspired its visitors for centuries. Oxford has been the muse of many poems and novels, and reading a selection of these was a portion of our assignment while in England. We looked at Oxford through the eyes of an English female writer in the 1920's, an American woman of privileged background, and a blind American male with an Indian heritage, among others.

Of all of the novels and autobiographies we read, I found myself smitten with the book in which the protagonist saw Oxford University through the same rose-colored glasses that I was looking through. Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* is the epitome of Oxford and reveals the romanticism of the city between the two world wars.

There has been much debate about how many of the characters and story lines have been written from Evelyn Waugh's own experiences at Oxford. While Waugh does not directly admit that his novel has autobiographical tendencies, the connections are there. To explain these similarities, Waugh defends himself by saying, "The novelist does not come to his desk devoid of experience and memory (*A Little Learning* 196).

As my Oxford trip will continue to be a part of me, Oxford's influence on Waugh's writing can not be avoided. Any profound experiences in one's life will refuse to fade away; they will always be revealed, intentionally or unintentionally, observed or unobserved. Through the explanations of my Oxford, Charles Ryder's Oxford, and Evelyn Waugh's Oxford, obvious comparisons will be drawn, linking nonfiction to fantasy.

KRISTA POMEROY'S OXFORD

My fellow Oxford travelers consisted of eleven students and three professors. Two of the professors were husband and wife, a history and an English professor. The normal morning routine consisted of one or the other leading the classroom discussion while the other would add points of interest or clarification in a cute, teasing manner. Their son was the youngest of the group and would be a freshman in the spring. He had been to Oxford several times and had even lived there as a child, so we often looked to him for knowledge of things he thought we should do and see while in Oxford. The other male of the group was very outgoing and easily made friends around the city. The other nine students, including myself, were women of all ages and majors: finance, history, philosophy, speech pathology and audiology, nursing, actuarial science, music, French, and English. Although my roommate, Erin Smith, and I were the only students who really knew each other before the trip, we all became fast friends.

After breakfast each morning, we retreated to the Quiet Room for a two-hour discussion of our reading or other Oxford stories. We discussed the town and gown conflict and whether we felt the same as Rosa, being an American in a strange place. We also spent a lot of time talking about Ved Mehta, a blind man from India who attended Balliol College. We discussed how it should have been impossible for him to get around a city where roads curve into another without any form of structure and where cars and coaches fly through intersections, but he managed. For our afternoons, we were given lists with items of historical or literary importance to see, and then we were set loose in the city.

We were in Oxford for two weeks, in which I fell in love with the city. Flowers were in bloom around the colleges' quads and in the flower boxes of homes and town buildings. Several of the back streets were still cobblestones, and even on the streets that had been paved, I could

— still see the cobblestone peaking through around the edges. Throughout Oxford, parts of the original city wall can be seen. The stone wall stood approximately ten feet tall and had occasional holes for arrows to exit through during attacks. Even the weather was perfect while we were in Oxford. Sunny days with bright blue skies were the norm. We had one day of constant rain, but that seemed fine to us. It was England. It was supposed to rain there.

— We went during the summer, the height of the tourist season. American, Japanese, and tourists of other nationalities crowded the city streets during the day, especially the Cornmarket and the Broad. The Cornmarket and the Broad were the strips that housed many of the local shops; sweatshirts, t-shirts and other memorabilia could be bought there. Street entertainment was common on the Cornmarket; a violin quartet, a man giving temporary tattoos, and two girls dressed and painted in silver were among the events I saw. Although the high level of tourism made it difficult to get down the streets, I think the tourists, shouting and hurrying everywhere, made the city seem more alive and energetic. All of those people were there to learn about the history of the city, which only added to my fascination.

Although we could not be classified as typical tourists, we were also there to study Oxford. We visited other colleges and the sites of historical importance throughout the city. We climbed St. Michael's at the North Gate, a tower that was built in 1050 AD. We saw the stone cross in the pavement on the Broad where three Christian martyrs were burned at the stake in the 16th century.

— On one of our first days at Oxford, our professors took us on a hike to Binsey, a neighboring village. People have made pilgrimages to Binsey for centuries because it is the home of Saint Frideswide's well. St. Frideswide was the beautiful daughter of a Saxon king. Although she planned on becoming a nun, men were constantly pursuing her. One day while

riding through the forest, Frideswide was attacked by one of her many admirers. When he was about to rape her, she prayed to God to help her, and her assailant was struck blind and could no longer see what he was doing. After much time had passed, Frideswide began to pity the blind man and prayed to God for his forgiveness. That night, she had a dream that instructed her to take him to the well and wash his eyes with the water. Frideswide did this, and the man's sight was restored. This is one of the many miracles that St. Frideswide performed. Although we enjoyed teasing our professor about the time it took to get to Binsey, it was one of the most memorable afternoons of our Oxford trip.

Another way we learned more history about Oxford was through a theatrical pub crawl. Two female Oxford students led us around to several of the cities' colleges and pubs where they performed skits, recited poems, or told stories. One place of particular interest was Hertford College, the college of Evelyn Waugh and his *Brideshead Revisited* protagonist Charles Ryder. We followed our guides around the quad to a large, first floor window with flowers underneath it. The girls explained that this was the room where Evelyn Waugh had lived and that Charles Ryder also had a first floor room overlooking the quad. In *Brideshead Revisited*, this room was the reason the characters Charles and Sebastian met. Late one evening, when Sebastian had had too much to drink, he leaned through Charles' window and vomited on his floor. Although this scene in the novel was humorous and well written by itself, seeing the actual setting that inspired it gave it new meaning.

The final stop on our theatrical pub tour was a pub called The Chequers. The Chequers was located down an alley in a building built in the 16th century. It had three levels, a balcony, an outside area with picnic tables, and inside walls covered with quotations. The students performed a scene from *Through the Looking Glass* because The Chequers was where Louis

Carroll spent a lot of his time and may have inspired a scene in his book. When the official tour was over, several of us chose to stay at The Chequers and have a few drinks while others chose to return to the college where we were staying to write in their journals. We had just arrived in Oxford the night before so we were still getting to know one another, and The Chequers seemed like the perfect place in Oxford to do it. It was the pub that we felt the most comfortable with, out of the seven we had tested out already. The Chequers became a favorite place to visit at night; we were there so often that we even made friends with the bartender, Karl, and his friend, Amanda, who told us fun stories about Oxford. Although we were probably looked upon as the alcoholics of the group, we were learning about a different aspect of Oxford in the dance clubs and pubs that we couldn't get in the usual Oxford tourist spots.

Our other rationale for the amount of time we spent at the pubs was that it was simply what people did in Oxford. In the majority of the books we read, there was a large emphasis on alcohol, although, mind you, they also pointed out problems associated with drinking. Going to pubs just seems to be a part of the life in Oxford. Each of the colleges has its own personal bar, which further suggests this emphasis on alcohol. Ved Mehta, one of the authors we read, probably explained it best when he said, "Wherever there are highly intelligent young people living in a community there will probably be a certain amount of drinking and antics, if for no reason than to oil the wheels of friendship. Besides, we at Oxford were certainly under intense intellectual pressure, and drink provided a sort of refuge from it" (Mehta 115). It is not my intention, however, to make our trip to sound like a constant party; we also worked hard.

We began the summer with a reading list of the books we would be discussing in class while in Oxford. Although I was a bit disconcerted, being a person who has never taken summer classes, to have homework required of me so soon after finishing an exhausting semester, I do

understand the purpose. When I applied for the study abroad program, the sum of what I knew about Oxford didn't add up to much more than Oxford being an important learning institution and a wonderful place to go, according to a friend. However, through the stories of people who have lived in, loved, or hated Oxford, I was taught about Oxford's character, people, and tradition, both good and bad.

Although I enjoyed most of the books, *Brideshead Revisited* brought Oxford alive for me more than any other did. I could envision the characters in the story walking down the Broad or smoking Turkish cigarettes. Charles and Sebastian held Oxford as a safe haven and a comforter, and this made me want to study in Oxford even more, to enter into their Oxford.

CHARLES RYDER'S OXFORD

In Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, we were introduced to a story of charm and child-like antics. Charles Ryder, the protagonist and narrator of the novel, is a history student at Hertford College. He had been lucky to be placed in the rooms on the first floor with windows facing the old quad. His pompous cousin Jasper vehemently tried to persuade him to change his rooms since its high-trafficked location would pull in the undesirables, leaving Charles without a moment of peace. However, Charles ignored Jasper's advice because he enjoyed the "deeply recessed windows and painted, eighteenth-century panelling" and the "gillyflowers growing below the window which on summer evenings filled them with fragrance" (22). This decision proved to be fate; the window to his room was what opened the door to Charles and Sebastian's friendship.

Charles' first friends at Hertford College were intellectuals; they were not the "flamboyant aesthetes" but were not "proletarian scholars" either. Although Charles was content

with his friends and his lifestyle, he mused, “even in the earliest days, when the whole business of living at Oxford, with rooms of my own and my own cheque book, was a source of excitement, I felt at heart that this was not all which Oxford had to offer” (23).

One night, when Charles was entertaining several of his “intellectual friends,” Charles had opened his windows to the quad to air the room of smoke. Stumbling through the quad was a noisy group of drunken students. Sebastian Flyte moved clumsily to Charles’ window, leaned over the ledge, and was sick on Charles’ floor.

The following morning, Charles returned home to bouquets of flowers and a note offering apologies and requesting his presence at a luncheon to be held in Sebastian’s rooms. By the end of the luncheon, Charles was completely enamored with Sebastian and was intrigued by Anthony Blanche, an extremely outgoing friend of Sebastian’s.

Sebastian Flyte attended Christ Church, one of the most prestigious colleges in Oxford, which was appropriate since he was the Marquis of Marchmain’s son and was expected to go to the best school. Although Charles and Sebastian did not study at the same school, Charles was aware of him early on: “He was the most conspicuous man of his year by reason of his beauty, which was arresting, and his eccentricities of behaviour, which seemed to know no bounds” (23-24). One of the most obvious of these eccentricities was that Sebastian was constantly in the company of his large teddy bear, Aloysius, whom he talked to and treated as a seven-year-old would. Sebastian could also be seen dining out in false whiskers or buying a hard brush to spank Aloysius with when the bear was being sulky. These actions were seen as sweet and charming and were adored by the majority of the Oxford community. Although Anthony Blanche is a friend of Sebastian’s and loves him dearly, one evening, Anthony invited Charles to dinner to talk about himself and ended up discussing Sebastian and his “*very sinister* family” (46). Lady

and Lord Marchmain's relationship was the center of discussion. Sebastian's parents were separated, with Lord Marchmain living in Italy with his mistress; divorce was not an option for Lady Marchmain because of her Catholic religion. Sebastian's sisters weren't permitted to see their father, his brother refused, and Sebastian got away with it because of his charm (47). After informing Charles of Sebastian's background, he concluded, "With that very murky background, what could he do except set up as being simple and charming, particularly as he isn't very well endowed in the Top Storey" (48).

Although Charles was initially fretful about the negative things Blanche spoke about Sebastian, he did not concern himself for long because Anthony Blanche loved the dramatic and the attention it brought him: "His vices flourished less in the pursuit of pleasure than the wish to shock" (40). At Sebastian's luncheon, Anthony used a megaphone on the balcony to recite T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* to a group of boatman on their way to the river. He also used his homosexuality to his advantage when confronted by other people by playing on their homophobia. Anthony enjoyed challenging conventions; for this and several other reasons, Charles was in awe of Anthony. Anthony was a world traveler and was exotic and tall, with large, saucy eyes (27). Anthony had friends who were writers and was knowledgeable about new artists and styles. All of these characteristics led Anthony to be referred to as the "aesthete par excellence" by many people in the Oxford community (27). Although Blanche's snobbish air made Charles feel inexperienced, he belonged to a world that Charles partially wanted to belong to.

With the excitement of his new group of friends, Charles strayed away from his intellectual group into, according to his cousin Jasper, "the *very worst set in the University*" (35).

Jasper's complaints went on to include how much Charles spent and how much he drank, especially in the middle of the afternoon. To all of this Charles replied,

"I'm sorry, Jasper. I know it must be embarrassing for you, but I happen to *like* this bad set, I *like* getting drunk at luncheon, and though I haven't yet spent quite double my allowance yet, I undoubtedly shall before the end of the term. I usually have a glass of champagne about this time. Will you join me?" (37).

Charles' defiance towards Jasper resulted from Charles losing his mother, who died helping the Red Cross during the war, when Charles was only eight. Since then his father has been "rather odd in the head" (34). This trauma created a lack of childhood for Charles:

"Now, that summer term with Sebastian, it seemed as though I was being given a brief spell of what I had never known, a happy childhood, and though its toys were silk shirts and liqueurs and cigars and its naughtiness high in the catalogue of grave sins, there was something of nursery school freshness about us that fell little short of the joy of innocence" (38).

There was no way Charles would give up these experiences for the stuffiness of Jasper's life.

All of these silk shirts, liqueurs, and cigars were expensive, and although Charles' father was generous with a hefty allowance, Charles was spending much more, as revealed through his conversation with Jasper. To extend his allowance as far as he possible, Charles used credit whenever the store would allow and even resorted to selling a screen to his friend to get more money. A good indication of where Charles learned his handle of money was exposed when his father was dismayed that Charles rarely went to the theatre because of a lack of money: "My dear boy, you must not let money become your master in this way" (57). His father felt the loss of money was worth the education drawn from the theatre.

At Oxford, education was not Charles' priority. During test time at the end of the term, Charles would have to ignore Sebastian for a week or so he could cram for a test. The idea of playing all term and studying hard at the end stems from the F.E. Smith legend, in which a

student can do nothing for 8 terms and still get a First by cramming for three weeks (Stannard 68). However, F.E. Smith's method failed for Charles, and he finished Oxford with a Third. Although Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* contained an "Author's Note," reading, "I am not I; thou art not he or she; they are not they" (Davis 1), Charles' Third, and many other items, are what draw readers to make connections to the author and his character's lives.

EVELYN WAUGH'S OXFORD

Evelyn Waugh found Hertford "a respectable but rather dreary little college" (*A Little Learning* 164) and had hoped to attend New College because it was the college his father and older brother had attended. Waugh experienced a calm first term, living in rooms tucked away above the JCR buttery in the oldest building at Hertford and spent a lot of time in the security of his old friends from Lancing. Waugh wrote in his autobiography, "But all the time it seemed to me there was a quintessential Oxford which I knew and loved from afar and intended to find" (*A Little Learning* 167). As with Charles Ryder, Waugh wanted more from his Oxford experience; he did not want to spend his years at Oxford in his rooms writing papers. This was also true for my Oxford trip. Many people chose to stay in and write in their journals, but I felt that journal writing could be done later. I was only in Oxford for two weeks, and I didn't want to miss any new experiences.

Eventually, Waugh found his niche at Oxford. He hiked to Binsey, a pilgrimage his predecessors had made and that my Harris Manchester group made. In his third term at Oxford, he was moved to nicer, larger rooms in the college, with windows that opened onto the old quad, and these rooms were rarely empty. Again, these rooms can be connected to Charles' life at Oxford; the fateful windows that Sebastian got sick through.

Waugh began spending money he didn't have on frivolous things. Waugh ran credit accounts in many of the local shops, which allowed him to dress neatly, but expensively, and enjoy fine wines, cigars, and Turkish cigarettes (Stannard 91). These were things Charles Ryder was also described as spending excess money on, and like Ryder, Waugh was also reduced to selling some of his personal items to his friends in order to make it through the term. However, unlike Charles' father, Waugh's father was not happy with his expenditures and often lectured him on the matter, causing him to only want to spend more (91).

Evelyn Waugh also found a new group of friends. Together, they called themselves the "Hertford underworld." They devoted the majority of the day to drinking, either at the local pub or in Waugh's room overlooking the quad, consuming copious amounts of alcohol and reciting verse in unison (177).

One of Evelyn's first friendships deteriorated because of his love of alcohol. Richard Pares studied at Balliol and was quiet with fair hair, blue eyes, and a pronounced Pre-Raphaelite beauty to which Evelyn was attracted (Stannard 82). It was Evelyn's first close homosexual relationship, although it was probably "idyllically platonic" (83). Stannard adds, "An unembarrassed delight existed in the exclusiveness of male company and, inevitably, intimate friendships developed" (83). An openness existed at Oxford that Waugh had not seen at Lancing, and this freed him to lose his sexual inhibition and enabled him to be comfortable. Richard was a brilliant, serious person and was disappointed in Waugh's disrespect for academic authority. In addition, Evelyn's friendship with Richard dwindled when they did not share the same adoration for drunkenness:

"The first friend to whom I gave my full devotion did not enjoy drinking and as a result we drifted apart I loved him dearly, but an excess of wine nauseated him and this made an insurmountable barrier between us.

When I felt most intimate, he felt queasy. He withdrew, or was withdrawn, from our company . . . (*A Little Learning* 191-2).

Richard Pares continued at Oxford and went down with a double First and a Fellowship at All Souls (Stannard 84), while Waugh continued his disregard for academic life.

All of Waugh's drunkenness left little time for schoolwork so Waugh and his friends did only the minimum amount necessary to stay in college. His biggest irritation was that his tutor, C.R.M.F. Cruttwell, expected him to work. One day, Cruttwell confronted Waugh about this in a blunt manner, since the delicacy in his Oxford manners had disappeared as a result of the war. Waugh, "fatuously haughty" and angry that "a common little man tried to correct him," responded that he didn't care about his college reputation (Stannard 76-77). After that day, Waugh and Cruttwell possessed a hatred for one another. In 1923, Waugh's second year at Hertford, Cruttwell refused to see Waugh at all, leaving him with no formal teaching at the university (76). This did not concern Waugh in the least. He now had more time available to enjoy drunkenness with his friends. Once, when asked what he does for Hertford, Waugh replied, "I drink for it" (*A Little Learning* 164).

Encompassing the Hertford underworld circle was a wide range of characters. One friend, Harold Acton, has been deemed the "dominating aesthete of his Oxford generation" (Davie 790). Acton was slim and slightly oriental in appearance, and he was openly homosexual and a notorious anti-athlete (Stannard 80). Waugh was impressed with Acton's background. While Waugh, at nineteen, had never crossed the sea and knew no modern language (*A Little Learning* 197), Acton had grown up in Chicago and Florence and spoke French. Acton already had a collection of poems with the publishers and introduced Waugh to *The Waste Land* and to writers like T.S. Eliot and Gertrude Stein (*A Little Learning* 196). Waugh felt that his work and tastes were amateurish next to the developed work and sophistication of Acton, and other

students from Eton, and this sophistication caused Waugh to admire Acton more. Waugh described him as “vividly alive to every literary and artistic fashion, exuberantly appreciative, punctilious, light, and funny, and energetic” (*A Little Learning* 197).

Evelyn Waugh states in his autobiography that he did not intend to make *Brideshead Revisited*’s Anthony Blanche in the image of his university friend Harold Acton, although he would if he could do so now (*A Little Learning* 196). However, there are still many similarities between the two men. Physically, Anthony Blanche and Harold Acton were slim and exotic and had a distinguishing voice. Waugh recalled Acton’s voice as resonating; Charles described Blanche’s as languishing, with occasional stutters that were probably inserted for dramatic effect. Both Acton and Blanche traveled as children, were flamboyant homosexuals, and had a zest, or energy, about them that made them extremely entertaining.

Another close friend of Evelyn Waugh’s was Terence Greenidge, whom he met during his second year at Hertford. Terence was an extremely eccentric person and “unpredictable in a mild, almost infantile fashion” (Stannard 74). In appearance, he was wildly unkempt, but still held tidiness important, and he often yelled Greek songs at night. Terence could easily be classified as a kleptomaniac (*A Little Learning* 76). In secret spots throughout Hertford, he would hide the items he stole. Even while carrying on a conversation, Terence would find loose pieces of paper lying on the ground and would stuff his pockets with them. Harold Acton later described Terence as “very mad. A dear, charming boy” (Stannard 74), and it was Terence Greenidge’s streak of madness that drew Waugh to him. “He represented a type to whom Waugh was perennially attracted to in the early years—bright, whimsical, child-like, undemanding and affectionate” (75). Evelyn and Terence remained friends long after Oxford.

Richard Pares' successor as intimate friend in Charles' life was Alastair Graham, who is referred to as Hamish Lennox in Waugh's autobiography. He was a small, quiet, gentle, whimsical man who possessed no interest in scholarly activities and left Oxford without a degree. In a way he was like Terence, with child-like warmth and earnestness (Stannard 94). Evelyn and Alastair were inseparable, and if they were separated, they would contact each other daily. Alastair was the Sebastian in Waugh's life. They would drive around to neighboring villages during the day and go to Oxford's city pubs at night, frequenting the Turf, the Nag's Head, and the Chequers: "Hamish had no repugnance to the bottle and we drank deep together" (*A Little Learning* 192).

Alastair's home was a haven for Evelyn for many years, especially the attic. He enjoyed writing there, and Waugh gives credit to Alastair for turning him to a literary career. Alastair's mother, who they would refer to as "Queen Mother," was a neurotic and possessive lady and kept her house in Warwickshire for Alastair. However, he rarely spent time there and planned to get rid of it the moment it belonged to him (*A Little Learning* 193). When Alastair and Evelyn did spend time there, Alastair's mother would constantly nag in order to get them to do something, but she rarely succeeded. She also made friends with Evelyn in an attempt to have a mediator between her and Alastair, but this too failed (*A Little Learning* 193). Alastair was also similar to Sebastian because of his mother. Lady Marchmain, like Mrs. Graham, attempted to have control over her son by making friends with Charles; however, Charles knew that would destroy his friendship with Sebastian.

Evelyn Waugh's lack of studying and abundance of drinking during his years at Oxford resulted in him never finishing a degree. He received a Third on finals, as Charles did in *Brideshead Revisited*. Waugh needed only one more term to complete the statutory nine terms of

residence. However, Waugh felt that his degree wasn't worth the extra time at Oxford, and his father felt it wasn't worth the money (*A Little Learning* 208). Since Waugh did poorly on his final exams, all his degree would offer him is just a few letters after his name (Stannard 94).

By including an "Author's Note," "I am not I; thou art not he or she; they are not they," in his first edition of *Brideshead Revisited*, Evelyn Waugh shows that he was already aware of the possible links readers may have between the novel and Waugh's true experiences. The similarities are there: a first floor room facing the quad, a Third in history at Hertford, an emphasis on alcohol, and an absence of schoolwork. His friends and relationships also shared characteristics with those in the novel. However, *Brideshead Revisited* should not be viewed as an extension of Waugh's autobiography. Waugh's characters have a depth of their own and a story that was developed in Waugh's imagination.

Although Evelyn Waugh may have included a few aspects of his personal experiences at Oxford, it is Oxford itself that causes many of Waugh and Charles Ryder's experiences to be similar. While at Oxford I noticed the city had a timelessness about it: ancient buildings, cobblestone walks, and city walls that had been there for hundreds of years. These were all present in the 1920's when Waugh attended Oxford and last summer when I studied there. However, these are merely structural elements. The timelessness of Oxford can be found through almost every aspect of the city. Similar to what Waugh would have worn at Oxford and Jasper wore in a scene of *Brideshead Revisited*, I also saw students walking around the city in their subfusc. I went to pubs that were opened long before Waugh ever got to Oxford. I drank and tried to spend as little time devoted to studying as possible while in Oxford. I met interesting people, heterosexual and homosexual. I looked at art, I spent money at the local shops, and I wandered the city streets. My experiences at Oxford, like Waugh's, can also be

compared to those in *Brideshead Revisited*. Because these aspects apply to many people's stays in the city, to write about Oxford and not have some experiences sound similar would be difficult. If an author succeeded in doing this, they would be failing to describe Oxford accurately, losing vital characteristics of the city.

Waugh stated in his autobiography that a writer cannot go to his desk devoid of memories and experiences. When Waugh sat down to write about Oxford and Charles Ryder's life at Oxford, how else could he portray them but through the eyes in which *he* had seen Oxford. Waugh needed to use his memories to show readers the beauty of the city; this is evident through the connections in *Brideshead Revisited*. It was Waugh's inspiring descriptions of the Oxford life that made *Brideshead Revisited* the Oxford novel in which I enjoyed the most, because it talked about Oxford in the way I saw it: a beautiful city with friendly, intelligent people and happy memories.

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